

## Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 PC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 /081 W

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R 230900Z SEP 75

FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4194

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USCINCLANT

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 1417

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT PINS MILI AO

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH UNITA SECRETARY GENERAL

FOLLOWING MESSAGE IS FROM NOVA LISBOA

1. QUOTE. I MADE RETURN VISIT TO UNITA HEADQUARTERS  
SEPTEMEBR 20 AND MET WITH SECRETARY GENERAL N'ZAU PUNA.  
AS SOON AS WE DISPENSED WITH FORMALITIES, N'ZAU PUNA  
COMMENCED ENERGETIC CRITICISM OF MILITARY PERFORMANCE  
OF FNLA. HE SAID FNLA IN NORTH WAS NOT PUTTING  
REAL PRESSURE ON MPLA, AND THAT FNLA TROOPS AND  
COMMANDERS IN SOUTH WERE UNRELIABLE, POORLY-TRAINED,  
AND COWARDLY. HE CITED NUMBER OF RECENT INSTANCES  
IN WHICH HEAVILY-ARMED FNLA UNITS ABRUPTLY WITHDREW  
FROM BATTLE POSITIONS AS SOON AS FIRST SHOTS  
WERE FIRED, LEAVING UNDERARMED UNITA UNITS ALONE TO  
FACE POWERFUL MPLA. FNLA MILITARY PERFORMANCE IN SOUTH,  
N'ZAU PUNA SAID, WAS SO POOR THAT UNITA COULD NOT  
LONG CONTINUE TO MOUNT JOINT OPERATIONS WITH FNLA. HE  
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HAD PROPOSED THAT EACH MOUNT SEPERATE OPERATIONS BUT

FNLA HAD REFUSED.

2. N'ZAU PUNA PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF WHITE OFFICERS RECENTLY RECRUITED BY FNLA. MOST OF THEM WERE WITHOUT PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN BATTLEFIELD COMMAND AND HAD BEEN COMMISSIONED ONLY BECAUSE THEY WERE WHITE. HE SAID THE WHITE FNLA SOLDIERS WERE PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CURRENT WAVE OF VIOLENT CRIMES AND HOUSE-SACKING IN NOVA LISBOA. THIS HAD CREATED A FEELING OF PANIC WITHIN THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNITY AND HAD LED MANY PORTUGUESE TO REVERSE THEIR DECISIONS TO REMAIN IN ANGOLA.

3. N'ZAU PUNA SAID THAT EVEN THOUGH FNLA MILITARY PERFORMANCE WAS WEAK, HE THOUGHT IT ESSENTIAL TO MAINTAIN UNITA/FNLA ALLIANCE UNTIL SOME POLITICAL SETTLEMENT COULD BE REACHED. ANY POLITICAL SETTLEMENT WOULD HAVE TO INVOLVE ALL THREE PARTIES. UNITA WOULD NOT ENTER INTO SEPERATE AGREEMENT WITH MPLA BECAUSE MPLA COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO HONOR SUCH AN AGREEMENT FOR MORE THAN A BRIEF PERIOD AFTER INDEPENDENCE. N'ZAU PUNA DOUBTED POSSIBILITY OF THREE-WAY AGREEMENT BEFORE NOVEMBER 11 SO HE ANTICIPATED PORTUGAL TURNING ENTIRE MATTER OVER TO THE UN. THIS WOULD FAVOR UNITA BECAUSE UN WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY ARRANGE SUPERVISED ELECTIONS WHICH WOULD PROVE SUPERIOR POPULAR SUPPORT OF UNITA.

4. REGARDING CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION, N'ZAU PUNA SAID THAT ALL RUMORS TO CONTRARY ASIDE, UNITA CONTROLLED LUSO AND LUSO AIRPORT. THERE WERE SMALL MPLA GROUPS OPERATING AS GUERRILLAS IN THE AREA AROUND LUSO BUT THESE WERE NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO CHALLENGE UNITA'S CONTROL OF CITY. OF VARIOUS BATTLES BEING FOUGHT CURRENTLY, MOST IMPORTANT WERE AT QUIBALA ON LUANDA-NOVA LISBOA HIGHWAY AND AT POINT ABOUT 10 KILOMETERS WWEST OF MARIANO MACHADO ON BENGUELA-NOVA LISBOA HIGHWAY. UNITA WAS HOLDING ITS OWN AT BOTH PLACES DESPITE MPLA'S VAST SUPERIORITY ON ARMS

5. N'ZAU PUNA SAID THAT PRESIDENT RAILWAY UNDER SOME FORM OF MPLA AND UNITA GUARANTEE NOT TO INTERFERE WITH

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ITS OPERATIONS. HE SAID UNITA WOULD BE WILLING TO ISSUE SUCH A GUARANTEE BUT HE DOUBTED THAT MPLA WOULD DO LIKEWISE. KILDAY. UNQUOTE.  
KILLORAN

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PERSONAL OPINION, LIBERATION FRONTS, POLITICAL LEADERS, POLITICAL SUMMARIES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 SEP 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** buchantr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975LUANDA01417  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750329-0506  
**From:** LUANDA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750926/aaaaawyg.tel  
**Line Count:** 111  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** buchantr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 11 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <11 JUN 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <22 OCT 2003 by buchantr>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CONVERSATION WITH UNITA SECRETARY GENERAL FOLLOWING MESSAGE IS FROM NOVA LISBOA  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PINT, PINS, MILI, AO, MPLA, FNLA, UNITA, (PIMA, NZAU)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006